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United Nations Forum on Forests
Working group established pursuant to paragraph 46 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33
New York, 16-20 January 2017
Item 3 of the provisional agenda*
Recommendations of the working group to the special session of the United Nations Forum on Forests

Proposal for the quadrennial programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests for the period 2017-2020

Submission by the Co-Chairs of the working group of the United Nations Forum on Forests

I. Introduction

1. By its resolution 2015/33, the Economic and Social Council established a working group and an open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group under the United Nations Forum on Forests. In accordance with paragraph 48 of the resolution, the expert group conducted two meetings in 2016 to develop and submit proposals to the working group on two matters referred to in paragraph 44 of the resolution: (a) the replacement of the reference to the Millennium Development Goals in paragraph 1 (b) of the United Nations forest instrument with an appropriate reference to the Sustainable Development Goals and targets; and (b) the strategic plan for the period 2017-2030 and the quadrennial programme of work for the period 2017-2020, consistent with section XI of the resolution.

2. The present document transmits proposals for the quadrennial programme of work for the Forum for the period 2017-2020, put forward by the Co-Chairs of the working group, Gholamhossein Dehghani (Islamic Republic of Iran) and Hans Hoogeveen (Netherlands). They prepared the proposals on the basis of the outcome of the second meeting of the open-ended intergovernmental ad hoc expert group, held in Bangkok from 24 to 28 October 2016, and on informal consultations held at Headquarters on 12 December.

* E/CN.18/WG/2017/1.

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II. Proposal for the quadrennial programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests for the period 2017-2020

3. The United Nations Forum on Forests will carry out its core functions on the basis of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017-2030. The Forum's quadrennial programme of work will represent its contribution to implementing the strategic plan and set the agenda for each session of the Forum within the quadrennium.

4. The quadrennial programme of work will identify thematic and operational priorities and the resources needed by the Forum to take forward priority actions.

5. The quadrennial programme of work will reflect the linkage between odd-year and even-year sessions of the Forum. As a general rule:

(a) Odd-year sessions will focus on implementation and technical advice, including the science-policy interface, with input from Collaborative Partnership on Forests members and regional, subregional and non-governmental partners;

(b) Even-year sessions will focus on policy dialogue, development and decision-making, taking into account the discussions and proposals of the previous session;

(c) Odd-year and even-year sessions for a given biennium will be thematically linked. Themes for each biennium will be identified by the Forum on the basis of the global goals and targets contained in the strategic plan, taking into account the annual themes and Sustainable Development Goals under review by the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

6. The twelfth and fourteenth sessions of the Forum will focus on technical advice and the thirteenth and fifteenth sessions on policy dialogue, development and decision-making (see tables 1-4 below).

7. Given that the twelfth session of the Forum, in 2017, will be the first session following the adoption of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33 and the strategic plan, it will be transitional in nature and may take decisions on matters called for in the resolution as needed to facilitate the Forum's work.

Table 1
Twelfth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, 2017

Priority actions	*Resource needs*[a]
1. Implementation of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017-2030[b]	
(a) Technical discussion and exchange of experiences on the priority thematic areas for the period 2017-2018 (to be determined)	
(b) Announcement of the voluntary planned contributions	
(c) Enhancing the involvement of stakeholders	
(d) Other issues relating to the strategic plan	

Priority actions	*Resource needs*[a]
2. Guidelines for the operation of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network and the availability of resources ((6) (f) (iv))[c]	
3. Guidelines for country-led initiatives and similar initiatives to enhance their contribution to the Forum's work ((6) (e))	
4. The Forum's contribution to the theme of the high-level political forum on sustainable development for 2017 — "eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world" — and a review of Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9 and 14	
5. Cycle and format for national reporting on the United Nations forest instrument ((16) (c))	
6. Action taken by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to strengthen its operations in support of the strategic plan and the quadrennial programme of work for the period 2017-2020	

[a] To be added.

[b] This standing item will also cover the discussions on the priority thematic areas for all sessions of the Forum in the period 2017-2020. The priority thematic areas will be identified in the quadrennial programme of work at the meeting of the Forum's working group and special session in January 2017.

[c] Citations in parenthesis refer to the relevant paragraphs in Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33 and the strategic plan.

Table 2
Thirteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, 2018

Priority actions	*Resource needs*[a]
1. Implementation of the strategic plan	
(a) Policy dialogue on the priority thematic areas for the period 2017-2018 (to be determined)	
(b) Announcement of the voluntary planned contributions	
(c) Enhancing the involvement of stakeholders	
(d) Other issues relating to the strategic plan	
2. Progress on the implementation of the United Nations forest instrument and voluntary planned contributions	
3. Measures to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network ((14) (a))	
4. Report on the Forum's trust fund	

Priority actions	*Resource needs*[a]
5. The Forum's contribution to the theme of the high-level political forum on sustainable development for 2018 — "transformation toward sustainable and resilient societies" — and a review of Sustainable Development Goals 6, 7, 11, 12 and 15	
6. Progress in the implementation of the Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33 (56)	
7. Collaborative Partnership on Forests report on its activities in support of the strategic plan and the quadrennial programme of work for the period 2017-2020	

[a] To be added.

Table 3
Fourteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, 2019

Priority actions	*Resource needs*[a]
1. Implementation of the strategic plan	
(a) Technical discussion on the priority thematic areas for the period 2019-2020	
(b) Announcement of the voluntary planned contributions	
(c) Enhancing the involvement of stakeholders	
(d) Other issues relating to the strategic plan	
2. Report on the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network and the availability of resources ((6) (f) (iii) and (iv))	
3. Enhancing global forest policy coherence and a common international understanding of sustainable forest management ((6) (f) (ii))	
4. The Forum's contribution to the theme of the high-level political forum on sustainable development for 2019 — "empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality" — and a review of Sustainable Development Goals 4, 8, 10, 13 and 16	
5. Measures to better synchronize data collection and reduce reporting burdens ((16) (b))	

[a] To be added.

Table 4
Fifteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, 2020

Priority actions	*Resource needs*[a]
1. Implementation of the strategic plan	
(a) Policy dialogue on priority thematic areas for the period 2019-2020	
(b) Announcement of the voluntary planned contributions	
(c) Enhancing the involvement of stakeholders	
(d) Other issues relating to the strategic plan	
2. Progress on the implementation of the United Nations forest instrument and voluntary planned contributions	
3. Report on the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network and the availability of resources (14.a) and its priority actions and resource needs for the quadrennial programme of work for the period 2021-2024	
4. Report on the Forum's trust fund	
5. Forum's contribution to the theme of the high-level political forum on sustainable development for 2020 and Sustainable Development Goals review	
6. Collaborative Partnership on Forests report on its activities in support of the strategic plan and the quadrennial programme of work for the period 2017-2020	
7. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change report on the implementation of the Paris Agreement	
8. Convention on Biological Diversity report on the Aichi Biodiversity Targets	
9. High-level segment including forest partnership forum with Collaborative Partnership on Forests and non-governmental organizations and private sector chief executive officers ((6) (d))	
10. Adoption of the quadrennial programme of work for the period 2021-2024	

[a] To be added.